

REMARKS

Claims 1-10, 13 and 17-101 are pending in the application. Claims 1-10, 13, and 17-101 have been rejected. Claims 22, 46, and 54 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 22-38 and 46-58 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants respectfully point out that we believe that the claims rejected should be 22-26, 36-38, and 46-58, because claims 27-35 depend from claims 1 and 17, which are not rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Consequently, Applicants have amended only independent claims 22, 46, and 54, assuming that claims 1 and 17 are statutory.

Amended independent claims 22, 46, and 54 now claim respective databases stored in computer-readable mediums. Applicants submit that claims 22, 46, and 54 now define structural and functional interrelationships between the database and the medium which permit the database's functionality to be realized. (See Examination Guidelines for Computer-Related Inventions at 9, Final Version, published by the USPTO, as published in the February 28, 1996, Federal Register (61 Fed. Reg. 7478) and available at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/hearings/software/analysis.computer.html>.) Accordingly, independent claim 22, its dependent claims 23-26 and 36-38, independent claim 46, its dependent claims 47-53, independent claim 54, and its dependent claims 55-58 are allowable for at least the foregoing reason.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Wagner reference

Claims 22-26, 36-38 and 46-58 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,092,102 ("Wagner"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 22 includes a database with the following tables:

- a communication channel table comprising information regarding a communication channel;
- a channel driver table comprising information regarding a channel driver that controls the operation of the communication channel and is operable to

provide an event from the communication channel and to issue a command to the communication channel;
an event table comprising information regarding the event; and
a command table comprising information regarding the command.

Wagner teaches an event notification function that selects one or more communication channels to communicate a message. (See Wagner, Abstract). The selection of a communication channel is made as a function of the type of the message and a user's preference for one or more of the communication channels to communicate that message. (See Wagner, Abstract.)

With reference to "a channel driver table comprising information regarding a channel driver that controls the operation of the communication channel...", the Office Action refers to the fact that "communication channel manager 124 employs tables of information that map from the identity of the user(s) of the message 130 to the address(es) employed by the communication channels." The example given is that the identity of a user (as coded in a unique number, such as 004655) is mapped to an e-mail address and/or a pager address, such as xyz@abc.defg.edu or 123456@skytel.com. (See Wagner, column 9, lines 26-29). The statement in the Office Action appears to indicate that the channel drivers are thought to be equivalent to either a user identity or to a user address used by a particular communication channel. Clearly, neither a user identity nor a user address is capable of controlling the operation of the communication channel, as required by independent claim 22. Therefore, all limitations of independent claim 22 are not taught by Wagner, and independent claim 22 and its dependent claims 23-26 are allowable for at least this reason.

Referring to independent claims 46 and 54, independent claim 46 claims a database having "a user interface object table comprising information regarding a user interface object of a user interface to communicate with a communication channel." Independent claim 54 has substantially the same limitation.

As noted above, in Wagner, a communication channel is selected as a function of the type of the message and a user's preference for one or more of the communication channels to communicate that message. (See Wagner, Abstract.) Examples of database tables provided in Wagner include one database to store preferences of the users for certain communication channels (e.g., e-mail is preferred to a pager). (See Wagner, column 11, lines 31-37.) Another

example database includes user preferences for characteristics of communication (e.g., reliability, time latency.) (Id.)

Applicants have searched and can find no reference to a database table with information about user interface objects that are used to communicate with communication channels. As a result, the user interface object table required by claims 46 and 54 is not taught by Wagner, and independent claim 46, its dependent claims 47-53, independent claim 54, and its dependent claims 55-58 are allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 36-38 are rejected for the same reasons as claims 49, 47, and 46, respectively. Independent claim 46 and its dependent claims 47-53 have been shown to be allowable over Wagner for the foregoing reasons. As a result, claims 36-38 are also allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

In summary, with regard to the Wagner reference, all limitations of claims 22-26, 36-38, and 46-58 are not shown. As a result, claims 22-26, 36-38, and 46-58 are allowable over the Wagner reference.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Rahman reference

Claims 1-10, 13, 17-21, 34, 39-42, 59-63, 67-76 and 84-94 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,463,292 (“Rahman”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 1 is shown below:

A method for communicating comprising:
 obtaining an event communicated via an incoming communication channel of a plurality of communication channels, wherein
 each communication channel of the communication channels has a media type,
 at least two communication channels of the communication channels have different media types, and
 the event corresponds to a work item available via the incoming communication channel;
 providing a notification of the work item via a user interface;
 receiving an activation of a work item object of the user interface, the work item object being associated with the work item; and
 issuing a command associated with the activation of the work item object to an outgoing communication channel of the communication channels.

The Office Action states that all limitations of independent claim 1 are taught by Rahman. Applicants respectfully disagree. Applicants have searched and can find no reference to a work item or a work item object in Rahman. For both limitations “obtaining an event via an incoming communication channel ...” and “the event corresponds to a work item available via the incoming communication channel,” the Office Action cites the statement that “data protocol detector 12 detects an alert message of a particular data protocol received by a mobile station 26.” (See, for example, Office Action, page 11, paragraph 37.) Applicants are unclear but assume that the intent of these statements is to identify the alert message as the event. Only the alert message is described as available via the incoming communication channel. No separate reference is made to identify the “work item available via the incoming communication channel” corresponding to the event. As a result, the claim limitations related to work items and work item objects are not shown.

Because all elements of independent claim 1 are not taught, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-10 are allowable for at least this reason. In addition, independent claims 17, 21, 67, 84, 85 all have similar limitations with respect to work items and work item objects and are allowable for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1. Accordingly, independent claim 1, its dependent claims 2-10, independent claim 17 and its dependent claims 18 and 34-35, independent claim 21, independent claim 67 and its dependent claims-68-83, and independent claim 85 and its dependent claims 86-94 are allowable for at least this reason.

Moreover, the Office Action states that the limitation “issuing a command associated with the activation of the work item object to an outgoing communication channel of the communication channels” is taught by the statement that the “alert response message is represented by (or derived from) the modulating signal suited for application to a modulator in the transmitter of the mobile station 26” (citing Rahman, column 5, lines 48-54; see Office Action, pages 11-12, paragraph 37). Applicants are unclear whether the command that is issued is said to be taught by the alert response message or by the modulating signal. In either case, Applicants respectfully assert that both an alert response message and a modulating signal represent data to be communicated rather than a command that can be performed by a communication channel. As a result, the limitation regarding issuing a command to a

communication channel of independent claims 1, 13, 17, 19, 21, 39, 59, 67, 84, and 85 is not taught by Rahman. Accordingly, independent claim 1, its dependent claims 2-10 and 27-33, independent claim 13 and its dependent claims 95-101, independent claim 17 and its dependent claims 18 and 34-35, independent claim 19 and its dependent claim 20, independent claim 21, independent claim 22 and its dependent claims 23-26 and 36-38, independent claim 39 and its dependent claims 40-45, independent claim 59 and its dependent claims 60-66, independent claim 67 and its dependent claims 68-83, independent claim 84, and independent claim 85 and its dependent claims 86-94 are allowable for at least this reason.

In summary, with regard to the Rahman reference, claims 1-10, 13, 17-45, and 59-101 have been shown to be allowable.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 27-33, 35, 43-45, 77-83 and 95-101 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,463,292 (“Rahman”) in view of U.S. Patent 6,389,132 (“Price”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Each of the claims 27-33, 35, 43-45, 77-83 and 95-101 is a dependent claim, depending from one of the independent claims 1, 17, 39, 67, or 13, respectively. Each of these independent claims has been shown to be allowable over the Rahman reference standing alone. As a result, claims 27-33, 35, 43-45, 77-83 and 95-101 are allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that a prima facie case of obviousness has not been made. In addition to the claim elements not taught or suggested by the cited references as described above, no suggestion or motivation to combine Rahman and Price has been shown, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. According to the Office Action with respect to claims 43-45, it would have been obvious to “apply the teaching of a status updating module to update a status of an agent using the interface to one of ready and not ready when the status object is activated as taught by Price to the invention of Rahman because this schedules customer requests to available agents and enables the customer to use their time in a more constructive manner rather than just ‘sitting’ and waiting for a response from an available agent.” (Office Action, pages 17-18, paragraph 60, citing Price, column 1, lines 52-65). Applicants respectfully point out that the invention of

Rahman does not deal with agents or a customer support center, but with redirecting messages from mobile phones to a network element, such as a user's computer system. The advantages of updating status of an agent are not apparent in the context of the Rahman reference, even in combination with Price, and no motivation to combine exists. Consequently, claims 43-45 are allowable for at least this reason.

Even if the inventions of Rahman and Price were to be combined, Applicants are unclear what the result would be. It is unclear whether agents would be users of the mobile phones or users of a network element to which a message would be redirected. If agents are users of a mobile phone, then the appearance of a ready or not ready status on the phone is likely of limited use. If the agent uses the network element to which a message is redirected, no user interface for the network elements has been described, and Applicants are unclear where the status would appear. In either situation, the combination of Rahman and Price would not provide the user interface with objects for issuing commands to an outgoing communication channel, as claimed in independent claim 39.

Claims 27-33, 35, 77-83, and 95-101 include claims related to work items and work item objects, which have been shown to be absent from the Rahman reference. It is unclear how a work item or work item object would be presented in either user interface described in the previous paragraph. The rationale for combining Rahman and Price is unclear, and claims 27-33, 35, 77-83, and 95-101 are not taught by the combination of Rahman and Price.

Claims 64-66 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,463,292 ("Rahman") in view of U.S. Patent 6,092,102 ("Wagner"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

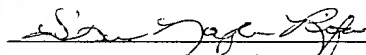
Each of claims 64-66 is a dependent claim depending from independent claim 59. Independent claim 59 has been shown to be allowable over both Rahman and Wagner. As a result, claims 64-66 are allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

In summary, each of claims 1-10, 13, and 17-101 has been shown to be allowable over the cited references.

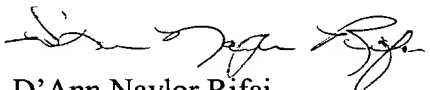
CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 512-439-5086.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on December 10, 2004.


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Date of Signature

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